

**COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (EQAC)**

**MEETING MINUTES
DATE: April 12, 2023
TIME: 7:20 p.m. – 9:51 p.m.
LOCATION:
Conference Room 4/5
Fairfax County Government Center**

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present/ Absent*	Name	Present/ Absent*
Larry Zaragoza (Chair, Mount Vernon)	P	Renee Grebe (Vice-Chair, At-Large)	P
Johna Gagnon (Franconia)	P	Stella Koch (At-Large)	P
Richard Healy (Mason)	P	Jacob Hammond (Student Member)	P
Ken Gubin (Dranesville)	P	George Lamb (At-Large)	P
Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)	P	Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	A
<i>Vacant</i> (Providence)		<i>Vacant</i> (At-Large)	
Rich Weisman (Sully)	V	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	A

* P indicates present; A indicates absent; V indicates attended virtually

Staff Attendance

Neely Law, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC)
Matt Meyers, Division Manager, OEEC
Kelly Zitzer (OEEC)
Matthew Hansen, Director, Land Development Services (LDS)
Chris Herrington, Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)
Ellie Codding, Deputy Director, Stormwater and Wastewater Division, DPWES

Call to Order/Remote Participation

Chair Zaragoza called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. and announced that Dr. Weisman had requested to participate in the meeting remotely. Chair Zaragoza read the remote participation language requirements and asked Dr. Weisman to state his name, location, and reason for remote attendance. Dr. Weisman shared that he was participating remotely from his home in the Sully District due to a medical condition. Ms. Koch moved to allow Dr. Weisman to participate remotely. Mr. Lanfear seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 9-0, with Dr. Weisman not yet able to vote and Messrs. Wilber and Campbell being absent from the meeting.

Agenda Items, Discussion, Decisions and Votes

1. Presentation on Forest Conservation Management Unit Changes (Matthew Hansen, LDS)
 - Mr. Hansen was joined in the presentation by Chris Herrington, Director of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.
 - Mr. Hansen shared that the Forest Conservation Branch (the group that reviews site plans and zoning applications) is no longer part of Urban Forest Management

Division (UFMD). It has been moved to LDS. The purpose of the transfer is to unite all reviewers of site development plans in one office. The move involves the transfer of 13 staff members from UFMD.

- Following Mr. Hansen’s presentation, discussion ensued on the following topics:
 - Enforcement of the Tree Ordinance;
 - Assessment of the county’s tree canopy cover and metrics used to measure changes; and
 - Division of responsibility between UFMD and LDS with such issues as tree inventory, tree planting, and pest management.

2. Update from DPWES on Operations and Funding (Chris Herrington, Ellie Codding, DPWES)

- Discussion centered on the issues of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and salt in the water.
- The science on PFAS is new and there are lots of unknowns. The County is relying on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for information.
- There is a need for more data and modeling to deal with PFAS and salt use. Winter changes have affected salt use and the amount of impervious surfaces yields higher salt concentrations.
- The County does not have the necessary authority to regulate PFAS. EPA is in the process of developing the regulatory framework to address PFAS. There is a lack of information and data on point sources versus nonpoint sources of PFAS.
- There was also a discussion on the language in the draft county budget letter on waste removal and sanitary sewer staffing need.
- Sewage overflow rate in county is three times lower than the national average. Board of Supervisors approved sewer rates earlier this week.
- DPWES has continued staffing challenges. County has eliminated shredding events because of a staffing shortage.
- There was also a discussion on the need to raise the stormwater tax, flooding issues in the county and solid waste issues.

3. Budget Testimony (Chair Zaragoza, All)

- Chair Zaragoza went over the draft EQAC letter and testimony on the county’s proposed fiscal year 2024 budget and there was a short discussion.
- Mr. Healy moved adoption of the letter and testimony. Ms. Koch seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 10-0, with Messrs. Wilber and Campbell being absent from the meeting.

4. Discussion on 2023 Annual Report on the Environment (All)

- Mr. Lanfear discussed his thoughts on how ARE chapters be developed and went over his draft template for a chapter.

- There was an extended discussion on the ARE Scorecard and how to highlight and prioritize recommendations.
- Council members agreed after a discussion to informally follow the proposed chapter guidance.

5. Approval of March 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lamb moved the adoption of the March meeting minutes. Ms. Koch seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 9-0-1, with Ms. Gagnon abstaining and Messrs. Wilber and Campbell being absent from the meeting.

6. Chair's Items

Chair Zaragoza went over the proposed agenda for the May 2023 EQAC meeting which included a presentation by Fairfax Water and hopefully a presentation on data centers in the county.

7. Council Member Items

- Mr. Lamb noted that the need for data centers is tied to the public's data use.
- Ms. Grebe noted that because of a court decision that the Board of Supervisors will need to revote on the modernized zoning ordinance. Ms. Grebe moved that the council resend its previous letter on agritourism. Mr. Lanfear seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 10-0, with Messrs. Wilber and Campbell being absent from the meeting.
- Ms. Gagnon reported on a recent meeting of the Fairfax Joint Local Emergency Planning Committee that included a discussion on fire department drones and lithium batteries.
- Dr. Weisman brought several transportation issues to the attention of the council.

8. Staff Items

- The student member application is online and applications are being accepted.
- The Environmental Excellence Awards presentation and reception went well.
- There is still a need for a May meeting notetaker.
- OEEC newsletter includes EQAC items. EQAC members and the public can subscribe to the newsletter at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/>
- OEEC relaunched the [Green Business Partners](#) program and hosted a forum on March 31.

9. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 9:51 p.m. following a motion for adjournment by Mr. Lamb, which was seconded by Ms. Gagnon and carried by a vote of 10-0, with Messrs. Wilber and Campbell being absent from the meeting.